

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (previously presented) An information browse method comprising:
 - a first search condition information setting step of setting a condition, inputted by any one user among a plurality of users, for searching for information suited to a first user, as first search condition information on this first user;
 - a second search condition information setting step of setting a condition, inputted by any one among the plurality of users in a way that specifies a second user, for searching information suited to this second user, as second search condition information on this second user;
 - an information searching step of searching, from within browsing target information containing a plurality of information elements, for an information element with respect to a certain user in accordance with information derived from the first search condition information set in said first search condition information setting step and information derived from the second search condition information set in said second search condition information setting step; and
 - an information presenting step of presenting to the certain user a piece of information corresponding to a searched result with respect to the certain user in said information searching step.

2. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 1, wherein said second search condition information setting step involves setting the information inputted in such a form that any one of the plurality of users specifies the second user to establish a mapping to setting user information indicating the user who inputted the information as the second search condition information on the second user, and

said information presenting step involves presenting to a user pieces of information on the respective information elements searched with respect to this second user, and presenting a piece of information indicating a setting user set as one element of mapping by way of the second search condition information with respect to the respective information elements searched based on the second search condition information.

3. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 1, further comprising:

a second information searching step of searching, based on the second search condition information set by the certain user with respect to second user in said second search condition information setting step, for an information element suited to this second user from the browsing target information, and checking whether or not the thus searched information element is searched by the first search condition information set in said first search condition information setting step with respect to the second user; and

a second information presenting step of presenting to the certain user a piece of information corresponding to a searched result and a checked result with respect to the certain user in said second information searching step.

4. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 3, wherein the first search condition information contains one or more pieces of information consisting of a keyword and a confidential flag for indicating whether or not a permission of using this keyword is given to the second user, and

said second information searching step involves performing the check about the searched information element by use of only the keyword having such a relationship that the confidential flag contained in the first search condition information set in said first search condition information setting step with respect to the second user indicates the permission of the first user.

5. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 1, wherein said second search condition information setting step involves generating the second search condition information by analyzing natural language information inputted in such a way that any one of the plurality of users specifies the second user.

6. (previously presented) An information browse method comprising:
a first search condition information setting step of making a server set information inputted by a first user as a search condition corresponding to a first user;
a second search condition information setting step of making said server set information by a second user as a search condition corresponding to a certain user;

a step of receiving from said server a result of searching based on the conditions set corresponding to information derived from the first and second users in said first and second search condition information setting steps.

7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented) An information browse system comprising:

a first search condition information storing unit of storing information, inputted by any one of a plurality of users, for searching for information suited to a first user, as first search condition information on this first user ;

a second search condition information storing unit of storing information, inputted by any second one of the plurality of users in a way that specifies a second user, for searching information suited to this second user, as second search condition information on this second user;

an information searching unit for searching, from within browsing target information containing a plurality of information elements, for an information element with respect to a certain user in accordance with information derived the first search condition information stored in said first search condition information storing unit and information derived the second search condition information stored in said second search condition information storing unit for information retrieval and sharing; and

an information-presenting unit of presenting to the certain user a piece of information corresponding to a searched result with respect to the certain user by said information-searching unit.

9. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 6, wherein said second search condition information setting step involves setting the information inputted in such a form that any one of the plurality of users specifies the second user to establish a mapping to setting user information indicating the user who inputted the information as the second search condition information on the second user, and

said information presenting step involves presenting to a user pieces of information on the respective information elements searched with respect to this second user, and presenting a piece of information indicating a setting user set as one element of mapping by way of the second search condition information with respect to the respective information elements

searched based on the second search condition information.

10. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 9, further comprising:

a second information searching step of searching, based on the second search condition information set by the certain user with respect to second user in said second search condition information setting step, for an information element suited to this second user from the browsing target information, and checking whether or not the thus searched information element is searched by the first search condition information set in said first search condition information setting step with respect to the second user; and

a second information presenting step of presenting to a the certain user a piece of information corresponding to a searched result and a checked result with respect to the certain user in said second information searching step.

11. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 10, wherein the first search condition information contains one or more pieces of information consisting of a keyword and a confidential flag for indicating whether or not a permission of using this keyword is given to the second user, and

said second information searching step involves performing the check about the searched information element by use of only the keyword having such a relationship that the confidential flag contained in the first search condition information set in said first search condition information setting step with respect to the second user indicates the permission of the first user.

12. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 11, wherein said second search condition information setting step involves generating the second search condition information by analyzing natural language information inputted in such a way that any one of the plurality of users specifies the second user.

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 3, wherein a control unit determines a recommendation degree corresponding to a hit keyword count with respect to each of the searched information elements searched using the first search condition and the second search condition.

17. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 16, wherein a recommendation degree is derived using data from a care-for-others information table and/or a favorite information table.

18. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 17, wherein a program having a larger hit keyword count in the care-for-others information table takes a larger recommendation degree value.

19. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 18, wherein information displayed in a program guide are sorted in a format corresponding to the recommendation degree of each item.

20. (previously presented) An information browse method according to claim 19, wherein said control unit receives electronic mail communications addressed to a logged-in user;

 said control unit reads all keywords entered into the favorite information table related to the logged-in user, and further reads all keywords entered into the care-for-others information table related to the logged-in user;

 said control unit searches the electronic mail communications for the keywords set in the favorite information table and in the care-for-others information table;

 said control unit executes the process of computing the recommendation degree of each of the electronic mail communications wherein the electronic mail communications are displayed according to a format corresponding to the recommendation degree for each item.